

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 3, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, and amend the remaining claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A An AC type plasma display panel of AC

type including comprising:

A2  
a front panel provided with display electrodes and a rear panel provided with address electrodes, ~~for~~ said front and rear panels displaying an image by causing discharge in the a discharge gas space formed between the said front and rear panels;

a dielectric layer placed on said front panel; wherein the display panel is provided with

a protective film made of metallic oxide covering the said dielectric layer, said placed on the front panel; wherein the protective film is being formed into a structure where columnar structures are densely packed, closely with each other, and a series of crystal structures through said protective film; wherein,

said columnar structures extend extending perpendicularly to an the interface between the dielectric layer and the protective film; and

more than 400 columnar structures are formed per the substrate area of  $1 \mu\text{m}^2$ .

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A-plasma~~ The display panel according to Claim 1, wherein the number of the columnar structures formed per the substrate area of  $1 \mu\text{m}^2$  is more than 500.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A-plasma~~ The display panel according to Claim 1, wherein the metallic oxide is magnesium oxide.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A-plasma~~ The display panel according to Claim 1, wherein the film thickness ~~to be formed as~~ of the protective film is less than 300 nm.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A-plasma~~ The display panel according to Claim 1, wherein ~~the film to be formed as the~~ said protective film is structured with at least one ~~or more~~ crystal axes axis, selected ~~among a~~ from the group consisting of  $\langle 111 \rangle$ ,  $\langle 220 \rangle$ ,  $\langle 100 \rangle$  and  $\langle 311 \rangle$ , along the normal on the substrate surface.